PETERS ENLARGEMENT VPON THE PRAYERS OF THE CHVRCH.

The sixt Edition.

VVhereunto is added certaine Queres and Cases touching the Theorie and Practice of Prayer: also Inducements and Incouragements to Perseuerance in that Dutie.

By Master HARRIS.

PSAL. 34.17.

The Righteous cry, and the Lord heareth and deliuereth them out of all their troubles.

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To the Reader.

His Sermon (thus made vp with mine owne and others Notes) I now ſubmit to Authority and cenſure: for ſubſtance, I yeeld heere is no more than what was deliuered; whether no leſſe, I haue not now to ſay: for circumſtance (I yeeld to the allegation) I acknowledge it ſeaſonable. The times ſhall euer bee cleared by prayer, whenſoeuer they looke ſadly vpon vs. Our Brethren abroad cry ſtill in the Churches words; *The Harueſt is paſt, and the Summer is ended, and wee are not holpen*; and wee (mee thinkes) ſhould adde with *Ieremie*; verſe 21. *I am ſore vexed for the hurt of the daughter of my people, I am heauy, aſtoniſhment hath taken mee*; *Is there no balme at Gilead, &c.* At home howſoeuer the Lord hath been gracious to howſoeuer *Ier.8.20.*

vs in the ſcarcity, yet we may in moſt places, take vp the Prophets words in another ſenſe, *Is the ſeede yet in the Berne? as yet the Trees haue not been deliuered of their burthen.* Looke into the 65 *Pſalme*, and thou ſhalt finde, that it is the Lord that findes both ground and ſeede, that giues both growth and ripening to the Corne; and therefore we ſhould wait vpon him with our preſents of praiſe & prayer. This were enough to make vs pray, but this is the leaſt of many motiues: for, *Reader*, thou ſeeſt the times, the World is now all eare and tongue, the moſt giuen with the *Athenians* to little elſe than to heare and tell newes, (vncertaine newes; the Author of all lies, as his Maieſtie hath told vs) the reſt are willing alſo to heare, and to heare Gods Truth, not Fables, and therein they do but as Saint *Iames* would haue them, ſo as they would adde doing to hearing, as he commands. But alas, whilſt we only profeſſe and diſcourſe of Religion, wee driue the practice of Religion out of the world, as one two iuſtly complaines. It is lamentable to conſider the little vſe that is made of Gods Ordi-

Hag. 2. 20.

Pſal. 65. 9, 10, 11.

Demonol. l. 3. *c.* 1. *ad finem.*

Sir *W. Ral.* preface.

nances

nances in moſt places; Preachers too often (I tremble to ſpeake it) be vſed like Poſt-horſes, ſpurd on till they be ſpent, & then a freſh is called for. in the meane, the World ſits ſtill, and thinkes to be ſaued for hearing. *Reader*, mourne for this, weepe for this, for this bodes a Iudgement, the Lord will reckon for the blood of his Prophets, ſpent as well as ſhed. To theſe reaſons, it will not be hard for thee to adde more. looke within thee, and round about thee, and ſo ſtirre vp thy ſelfe to this exerciſe of Prayer, an exerciſe (I can aſſure thee) of vnſpeakeable ſtrength and comfort, an exerciſe without which thou canſt not liue, and by which thou maieſt liue in the mouth of death. Beleeue it, wert thou in an eſtate more deſperate than death, in a place worſe than hell; yet if there thou couldeſt pray truly, thou ſhouldeſt finde comfort and ſtrength beyond hope, for Prayer is better than our hopes, and yet God is better to vs than our prayer. Firſt for that which is publike, follow him who was no time-ſeruer; make no ſmall account of publique prayers. Secondly, for priuate, pauſe before thou ſpeak,

remember who ſpake it: if a man would not deliuer an Oration to a Prince *extempore* and ſuddenly, it will not become vs to open our mouthes raſhly before our Maker: ſecondly, keepe touch with God; firſt, for extraordinary and incidentall occaſions, be ſure to keepe thy ſelfe in ſuch a ſtate and condition of ſoule, as that euer thou canſt recollect thy ſelfe and cal in all the powers of thy ſoule for this buſineſſe vpon a ſhort warning: ſecondly, for ordinary times, ſo neere as may be, faile not of thine houre: when the Clocke ſtrikes, the Schollar runs to his book. Thou muſt to God; leauing all, there tender thy ſelfe (though not alwayes alike fit) and ſo be in the way and place of preferment: if words will not come, ſigh, *God heares the ſighings of his priſoners*: if thou canſt not ſigh, breathe, God hath an eare for that, *Lam.* 3. 56. Howeuer, there bee, there ſtand, & the child that ſtands before his father, & trencher in his place at ſupper-time with his appeares in his hand, ſpeaks with his countenance, and ſpeeds accordingly:
M. *Gr.* he was wiſe, who ſaid. They pray not altogether of faſhion, who ſee their infirmity

in

in praying, and are grieued for it; the worſt prayers that we make (to our owne ſenſe I meane) ſpeede euer beſt, and then wee pray moſt happily, when we ariſe moſt humbled.

Thirdly, when thou haſt prayed, do not as children, who neuer looke after their arrow; but as *Daniel. cap. 9. 1.* take notice of thine enlargements in prayer, and of thy ſucceſſe after; write downe time and place as the Prophet doth, and ſo helpe thy ſelfe in future times by former experiments. I ſee this Porch growes wide, and therefore I wil conclude. If thou be acquainted with prayer, thou knoweſt there is more in it than can bee expreſſed; if thou be not acquainted, grow acquainted, and thou ſhalt finde me true. If thou wanteſt further motiues and directions, I commend (in this haſte) to thee, who art but a poore Engliſh priuate man; Firſt, for the promiſes (wherof the heart muſt chew before prayer) the *Treatiſe of Faith*. Secondly, for motiues, the *Epiſt. to the key of heauen*. Thirdly, for caſes of Conſcience, & directions after prayer, two *Treatiſes* on *Eph. 6. viz. The ſpirituall Armour*, and

and now after directions and exhortations, what remaines but practice? In ſtead of others pratling & enterdealing in State-buſineſſe, do thou pray, pray for thy Soueraign, for his ſeed, for the Churches, for thy ſelfe, for thy charge, and vſe no more words againſt mens ſins, than thou wilt make prayers for their ſoules in ſecret, if thou wilt haue comfort in thy words. Thus much of this: Now *Reader* to thee; if theſe plaine notes paſſe the Preſſe, know that I neither did entend their publiſhing before I preached them, nor can intend notwithſtanding their refining ſince. If the world may be bettered by them, or by any thing I can do, I haue enough, onely I deſire mercy and equity from my friends: thoſe notes of mine which they haue, I will my ſelfe (after my publike Miniſtery) now ſhortly reuiſe: let no man doe ſo ill an office, as to thruſt out other mens Notes without their priuity, eſpecially his, who can do nothing worthy this Age.

R. C. HARRIS.

PETERS ENLARGEMENT.

ACTS 12. 6, 7.

And when Herod would haue brought him forth, the same night Peter was sleeping betweene two souldiers, bound with two chaines; and the Keepers before the doore, kept the prison.

And behold, the Angell of the Lord came vpon him, and a light shined in the prison: and he smote Peter on the side, & raised him vp, saying; Arise vp quickly: And his chaines fell off from his hands, &c.

HERE is a Story of *Peters*, 1. Imprisonments. 2. Enlargements: With the cause of the one, and meanes of the other. *Herod* hauing vexed some, slaine a second, now commits the third; and all this to gratifie the Iewes. *Peter* thus committed, is bailed by the Church, or rather remooued and freed by petition; they pray heartily for him in the 5 verse, and they speed as

happily; whileſt they are praying, God giues in the priſoner amongſt them. The manner of his deliuery is here reported, and that was very ſtrange, beyond *Herods* purpoſe, the priſoners expectation, the Keepers meaning, all mens hopes: *Herod* held his purpoſe he had begun, and the next morning he meant an end of him. *Peter* had made his concluſion; to-morrow, (thinkes he) (for meſſages paſt betweene him and the Church, which ſpent this night in prayer for him, and therefore knew the danger) I muſt be put to it, therefore I will ſtrengthen my ſelfe to night. The Keepers ſtood vpon their guard, and reſolued that no *Peter* ſhould paſſe them: yet is *Peter* deliuered; and how I pray you? God remoues all impediments, for nothing was in readineſſe.

First, for man, entrance was there none, therefore God ſends an Angell, and there was no ſtop againſt him.

Next, in the darke it was hard to find which was which. God directs an Angell to him, and hee comes vpon him, and miſſes not the man, though bound to the ſame chaine with two others; as in ſtrict impriſonments they vſed to doe.

Thirdly, they were in the darke, and that was ill for noiſe. The Angell brings his darke lanthorne with him, and ſhines to *Peter*, and none elſe.

Fourthly, the priſoner can doe little for himſelfe: he is *aſleepe*, the Angell *wakes* him; hee is *laid*, the Angell *raiſes* him; he is *amazed*, the Angell *directs* him; hee is *bound*, the Angell *vnties* him; hee knowes not *where hee is*, the Angell guides him; he

is,

is to passe thorow sundry difficulties, the Angell conducts him thorow them all, and so dismisses him.

We will vse no more words about a plaine Storie, but acquaint you with our meditations: they containe the successe of the Churches prayers; *they prayed for Peter*: the Angell thereupon is sent to *Peter*: where see, 1. *How the Angell findes him*: 2. *How the Angell deliuers him.*

For the first, he findes him *sleeping* in the midst of feares and foes: From whence was this sleepe? was it worldly sorrow that caused it, or was it carnall security?

Ans. In doubtfull things, charity supposes the best; so should we: worldly sorrow causes sleepe, but how? when it is not extreme, and that sleepe is ioyned with starting. Carnall security will cause sleepe: but why should we charge *Peter* with that at this time? his sleepe came from a better cause, hee was at peace with God, he had the Churches prayers for him, the cause for him, his conscience for him, God and his Angels for him: he could die but once, and for one death he was prepared: hence his boldnesse before, Chapters, 4. and 5. hence his confidence: here he resolued with *David*, *I will lay me downe and sleepe*, and withall, God gaue rest to his beloued, as it is in the *Psalmes*, rest more than ordinary to his mind, to his body: hence the Angell can hardly awake him, and being awaked, he is not terrified, as a guilty person would haue bin in this case: doe then but consider, 1. The man. 2. His behauiour in like cases. 3. The time and

circumstances. 4. The exercises of the Church for him. 5. The messenger, and message sent to him. 6. The manner of his behauiour when he is awaked, and you will see that his sleepe grew not from distemper, but from strength of faith and comfort.

Now to the Points.

Doct. 1. Where first from the order, see the power of ioynt prayers; they beare downe all before them, and preuaile in heauen & earth: as the Word that comes from heauen, prospers in the thing whereunto it is sent; so the word that goes to heauen, the prayers of the Church, strike vp to God, there they lye at his gates, and neuer will away without their errand; & when they are answered, then they come downe with authority, and raigne ouer all impediments below. Witnesse this Story: *Peter* is committed, the persecuters are resolute, the foes many, the friends few, meanes none but God: to God the Church goes; the enemies plot, the Church prayes; they shut the prison doores, the Church opens heauen doores; so there's old tugging for the prisoner, but the Church winnes him. God, to let them see what prayers be, sends him to them while they are praying; There, saith God, (if you will take no denyall) there hee is; thereby pointing vs to the meanes of his deliuerance: wee need not many words for proofe of this: S. *Iames* saith, *The prayer of one righteous man preuailes much*, if of one, what of twenty! what of an hundred! and he instances in *Eliah*, *Hee alone could open and shut heauen*; then well may many open and shut prisons on earth. Nay, adde further, the ioynt prayers of

Esa. 55.

Iames 5.

vn-

vnbeleeuers & hypocrites haue done much: when heathenish *Ninive* fasted and prayd, God heard; when false *Rehoboam* humbled himselfe & his people, God was intreated; how much more shall the faithfull prayers of the Church preuaile? preuaile (I say) both for the preuenting & remouing euils, and obtaining and keeping of good things? What shall we instance the life of *Asa*, *Iehosaphat*, *Hezekiah*? when was it otherwise? when did the Church of God euer ioyne in a common petition to God, but they sped? no instance to the contrary. Ionah 3. 2 Chro. 12.

No maruell, this exercise is well grounded and warranted, it hath the warrant of a Precept: 1. *Pray for one another: Call vpon me.* *Reas.* 1. Iames 5.

2. The warrant of a promise, *I will deliuer thee.* Psal. 50.

3. The warrant of experience: neuer any yet vsed it, but they preuailed.

Prayers are Presents, very welcome vnto God, he prefers them to all sacrifices, being immediate worships of his Maiestie; Let me heare thy voyce, it is pleasant. No father loues the voyce of his children, like as God loues the voyce of his Church; *Tis his Musicke and perfume, Rev.* 5. 8. *Reas.* 2. Cant. 2. 14.

3. The parties are very deare who tender them, God loues his Church aboue all creatures, he gaue his Sonne for her, and therefore her sutes shall haue acceptance: *Let me see thy face, its comely.* *Esther* neuer pleased *Ahasuerosh* so well as the Church pleaseth Christ. *Reas.* 3. Cant. 2. 14.

4. The parties from, and through whom they are presented, please; they are indited and abetted by the holy Ghost, *Rom.* 8. tendred by Christ Iesus *Reas.* 4. Rom. 8.

Ieſus, and ſhall theſe be denyed? Adde to this, 5. The party to whom they are directed, to God; who is all truth, mercy, grace, wiſdome, power, and ſhall not theſe preuaile? Prayers ſet God on worke, and all in God, his wiſdome, his power, his Angels, and what then can hinder?

Vſe 1. Looke backward, and call to minde your ſinne this day, ſee, many a *Peter* hath beene in priſon, and prayers were not made by the Church: many a member ſicke, and prayers were not made by the Elders; yea many a Church diſtreſſed, *Bohemia* afflicted, the *Palatinate* and *Valtoline* diſtreſſed, yet wee did not pray; the Enemy could curſe, but we did not pray: and therefore how iuſtly might God diſtreſſe and leaue vs deſtitute of his helpe, and the Churches Prayers.

2. Looke forward, and preſerue and improue this your intereſt in God, let no *Peter*, no Preacher, no Chriſtian, no neighbour lye in the chaines by you, (whether in the chaines of ſickneſſe or pouerty, or debt, or paine, or ſinne, or temptation) but doe you reprieue him: you haue a key that will open any locke, a medicine that will heale any wound, a weapon that will preuaile in any place; draw this weapon, vſe this medicine: if men be ſicke, pray them whole; if poore, pray them rich; if ſad, pray them merry.

But is this ſo eaſily done? Yes verily, by the whole Church. As it is for the outward eſtate when one is very poore, it is hard for two or three to ſet him vp againe, but nothing for a thouſand; and when one is in a pit, it is much for one, but not for many

many to pull him out: see here, it is long of vs that men lye so long vnder their burthens: would wee ioyntly commend them to God, our praiers would take, mens chaines would off, true spirituall chains. Why, if so, were it not worth the while? What, may we ease our brethren of temptations, of passions, of lusts, and will wee not? But for outward crosses, saith not Saint *Iames*, let the prayers of the Church heale the sicke? Saith not the story, the praiers of the Church procured *Peters* liberty? But say they be not alwaies deliuered; yet it is good to get the crosses mitigated, sanctified, sweetned; and something will be done if we pray. Doe this then or nothing. Perhaps you will excuse other negligences: you would visit your sicke neighbour, but you question his disease, your welcome, you would relieue your poore neighbours, but you haue it not; why there is no Christian man, but he hath an interest in God, a spirit of prayer; lift vp a prayer for the bretheren, if thou canst doe nothing else, and this will doe thee and him good: praier in this case for others, is a cleerer euidence of grace, that for our selues. *Ob.* *Ans.* *Ob.* *Ans.*

Heere is comfort and encouragement; comfort for our selues, if members of the Church, if we bleed with her, if wee pray for her, if we say, *If I forget thee, O Ierusalem, then let my right hand forget her cunning*: the comfort is great; wee haue that which Saint *Paul* thirsted for, the prayers of the Church. And this is a priuiledge worth ten worlds, and a comfort beyond all apprehension, when a man lookes round about him, and can say, there is

a crowne

a towne, I haue some prayers there; there is another, I haue stocke going there, nay, in euery Shire, euery Nation; some that be enlarged when I am barren, some quickned when I am dull: and I am an aduentuer in the Churches ship, I haue a stocke in her treasure, and an interest in her prayers; this keepes the head aboue water, and preserues from sinking.

4. For encouragement, to pray for the Church: would Gods people enter into a holy league, and tie themselues into their seueral closets, to spend so much time weekely, or dayly in prayer, for some particular person, or place, Church or Nation; I wonder how they should misse. Tell me where euer the Churches ioynt prayers did euer mis-cary, or proue abortiue; in what place, in what case, for what people? Prayers haue bin made for men out of the Church, and haue sped, witnesse *Nineue*; for men in the Church (good men, bad men) and haue sped; prayers haue beene made by Land, and haue preuailed; on the Seas by *Ionah*, and haue sped: they haue preuailed vnder the earth, in dens, and dungeons, and caues; prayers haue beene made for sicke men, and haue holpe them; for dying men, for poore men, for captiues, for prisoners, & haue holpen; for men against persecution, against temptation, against sorrow, against beasts, against men, against deuils: prayers haue been omnipotent heretofore, why not now?

ob. *Ob.* Why now, if we were as others, Gods hand (we know) is not shortned, his eare not heauy; but our sins, our crying ripe sinnes, hinder good things from vs.

Anſ.

Anſ. Why therefore ſet againſt thoſe ſinnes by prayer, caſt out your owne, cry downe other mens, out-cry them.

Ob. Oh but they cry lowd.

Anſ. Yet prayer hath the ſtronger voice, the blood of Chriſt ſpeakes better things than bloody ſins, &c. Let *Sodome* yeeld ten holy men, and ſhe ſhall be ſpared; let one *Eliah* ſtand vp for ſtiffe-necked Iſrael, and one *Amos* pleade for rebellious Iuday, and God will ſhew mercy. Gen. 18. Iam. 5. Amos 7. 1, 2.

Ob. True indeed, if we had ſuch as they, but our prayers are weake and faint.

Anſ. 1. They were men ſubiect to like paſſions. 2. The prayer of the righteous is preuailing. 3. Iam. 6. 16, 17. Theſe heere mentioned were new Conuerts, yet preuailed with God for *Peter*.

Ob. Oh but here the whole Church ioyned: if all *Iſrael* might meete from *Dan* to *Beerſheba*, there might be ſome hope.

Anſ. We may, and doe more then theſe might; 1. we may meet in publike Aſſemblies euery Sabbath: 2. theſe were but few that liued in the darke, and met in the night, and in *Heſters* time in their ſeuerell families, and the whole State was then againſt the Truth, and againſt the Scriptures, and all Religion was diſgraced; yet then then they preuailed, much more now.

Ob. But now it is too late, many Churches abroad be quite ſcattered, many men at home haue their backes and hearts quite broken with wants, temptations, diſcouragements.

Anſ. Whileſt God cals in his Word, it is not too

late, God is vſed to ſee men ſinking before he ſets in, their extremetie is his opportunity; when *Peter* is within one night of the ſword, then his time.

Ob. But I haue waited, and ſee no ſucceſſe?

Anſ. *Anſw.* So did the Church; they pray for *Peter* this weeke, the next, and the next, the doores bee ſtill ſhut, the chaines be ſtil on; well, now they haue but one night more to waite, they waite that, but ere morning all is wonne: If then we haue but one day, one night, one houre to ſpend; hope, pray, waite that day, that night, that houre: God will be ſeene in the Mount, deliuerance ſhall come if prayer go on the errand; it euer was ſo, ever ſhalbe ſo, diſpute not but beleeue; there is no prayes and ſpeakes not, and there is to that ſpeaks, who prayes not; if thou wilt pray, thou muſt open thy needs to God, as thy Father, through Chriſt, God-man as thy Mediatour, from God the holy Ghoſt, as the inditer of thy prayers: if thou wilt pray, thy heart muſt be 1. emptied of purpoſes of ſin: 2. broken: 3. purged from guile by faith; which faith muſt then work, before thou beginneſt; ſay, with *Dauid, I will call, and God will anſwer me*; and when thou haſt done, conclude, I haue ſpoken, and ſhal in due time and manner be anſwered; thus doe, and be ſure that thou neither begin nor end a lawfull petition (of ſuch onely we ſpeake) before thou art aware, let faith enter thy ſute, and end, and ſubſcribe it, and thou prevaileſt.

Gen. 21.

Pſal. 66. 18.

Pſal. 86. 7. And the 56. 9.

Now to particulars.

How finds the Angel Peter? Sure he cannot ſleep this night, being vpon his life to morrow, and in all

all likelihood knowing of it by the Church: howsoever, not sure of life one day to an end, but like enough to be sent for at an houres warning, as *Iohn Baptists* head was. Notwithstanding all this, *Peter* sleeps as soundly as euer in his life, & wakes without terrour; whence was this, from corruption? no: from naturall courage? no: when *Peter* was younger, and therefore naturally bolder, he was a dastard: whence then? consider the reasons before, and it will be found, that it was from speciall comfort and confidence in God, which comfort most attends prisons and persecutions: here see the strength of spirituall peace and comfort.

The Lord hath comforts for his children, that will quiet and support them in any feares & straits, his consolations will make a man sleepe without a bed, liue almost without a soule: They will make one bold in danger, quiet in trouble, liue in the iawes of death: *The ioy of the Lord is strong*, saith *Nehemiah*, strong indeed that will carry a man ouer all: *Peter* had a strong heart, that can thus sleepe, thus wake, that can looke vpon Chaines, vpon Prisons, vpon Tyrants, vpon Torments, vpon Angels; (good and bad) and neuer breake his sleepe for the matter. *Pauls* ioyes were strong, that made him *sing in the stockes*: *Dauids* faith strong, that made him say, *I will lie downe and sleepe, I will not feare though ten thousand rise vp against me*: those were strong & strange ioyes that supported *Dauid* in all his feares, and made him say, *In the multitude of my thoughts, thy comforts glad my soule*: Those strong that triumphed ouer rackings, mockings, scourgings, &c. as

Doct. 2.

Nehe. 8.

Act. 16.

Psal. 3.

Psal. 94. 19.

in the eleuenth to the *Hebrewes*.

1 Qu. Whence these comforts.

Queſt. But whence comes their ſtrength?

Becauſe they be Gods ioyes, the ioyes of the Spirit, deriued immediately from the fountaine; and things be pureſt and ſtrongeſt there.

2. Becauſe ſpirituall; for as ſpirits are more actiue and powerfull than bodies, ſo things ſpirituall then bodily and naturall.

3 Theſe ioyes are moſt certaine and durable, theſe overcome and outliue all croſſes, and all other comforts.

4. They are al-ſſiucient, and borrow no helpe from creatures: Nature and Art worke with inſtruments, and by meanes, they cannot ſupport without meate, ſtrengthen without ſleepe, giue ſleepe without warmth, nor warmth without a bed, &c. But God can beyond means, without means, work comfort, make one ſee in the darke, liue in death.

2 Qu. What.

Queſt. But what be theſe comforts of God?

Anſ. Precious promiſes applyed by God in due ſeaſon, and brought home to the heart, which reuiue the ſpirits more then any balme; & theſe promiſes come thicke vpon *Peter* now: He thinketh, hath not God ſaid, that *the ſighing of priſoners comes to him*, that *he bottles vp all our teares*, that *we ſhould caſt our care vpon him, and he will care for vs*, that *in ſix or ſeuen troubles they ſhall not come neere me*, that *in fire and water he will be with me*, & did I not heare my Sauiour ſay, *Bleſſed are they that are perſecuted for righteouſneſſe ſake*; reade not I how *Dauid* ſaid, *I will lye downe and ſleepe*, and therfore I wil do ſo too.

2. Strengthening graces, God powres the ſpirit of

of faith, patience, power, courage, into his, in due time; and they raiſe the heart, as wine the fainting ſpirits; euety ſauing grace is healing, is ſtrengahening.

3. Hourely experience of Gods care and prouidence; and a childe neuer ſees the loue of his mother ſo much as when he is ſicke, ſo Gods children, &c.

Now that makes them plucke vp their feet with *Iacob*, and ſay with *Paul*, *I know whom I haue truſted*; and with the Church, *Thou wilt guide vs to death*; and after (as *Dauid* addes) *receiue to glory*.

4. Speciall peace of conſcience, and ioy of the holy Ghoſt, by new expreſsions of Gods fauour, and rauiſhments of heauen: then God opens heauen, and they ſee their life and Crowne, and ſo are carried ouer all.

Queſt. When doth God thus comfort his? 3 Q. When.

Anſ. When they moſt need it, as then the mother brings out her preſerues, when the childe is ſicke: firſt, when they be moſt humbled and empty of themſelues; therfore after greateſt humiliations come greateſt conſolations, as *Dauid*, *Abraham*, and others euer found.

2. But ſpeeially in the day of tryall and perſecution, the more the Deuill beſtirres him, the more God heſtirres him: thus the ſweeteſt nights that euer *Iacob* ſpent, were in the field, and ſo for *Peter*; and when had *Dauid* thoſe large affections to riſe at midnight, when was the World ſo ſweet, but when his troubles were bitter? Gen. 28. and 32. chap. Pſal. 119.

The vſe is double, 1. get theſe comforts, we get *Vſe.*

aqua vitæ, ready against qualmes; Bezoar-stone, and cordials against fits: but the cordials that helpe all, is the holy Ghost the Comforter. Art is blind, and often posed; Nature weake, and often foyled; (like a bow that must not be drawne beyond compasse) onely grace and spirituall comfort is invincible: get this, and you may sleepe in a dungeon, liue in
Dan. 5. the darke, want all, and yet haue all; want these, and a flea may breake your sleepe; and a hand-writing dash your mirth in the midst of all friends.

2. Let such as haue spirituall hearts thus affected, stay themselues here; feare not povertie, there be comforts beyond the paine of famine; feare not sicknesse, there be comforts beyond all fits of sicknesse: feare not death, feare not chaines, feare not any thing that you can or shall suffer: Not any
Rom. 8. 10. thing? Why, a man is subiect to racking, to burning, &c. yet feare not, and why? the Lord hath comfort in all, and about all tribulations: when he
2 Cor. 1. cals a *Saul* to a crowne, he makes him another man: so when he cals a man to a chaine. *Peter* is not the man in prison he was out of prison; at the first he was fearefull of a Wenches word, after he was willing, yet flesh hung backe, *Iohn* the last Chapter,
Acts 5. 29. 4. 13. vers. 18. But when put vpon it, heare his voyce, see his face; he can be as quiet, as comfortable, as well in prison as euer.

Ob. *Ob.* Oh but I find my selfe afraid of words?

Ans. *Ans.* So was *Peter* at first.

Ob. *Ob.* Oh but, saith our Sauiour, beware of men.

Ans. *Ans.* No man so malicious as God is mercifull, so perillous as God is pittifull. Oh but say we liued where

where we ſhould lie in cold irons; in the darke, be halfe pined, ſtarued; who can beare theſe? *Peter* can, any can, when God cals them to it.

O but ſay we were put to the fiery tryall, flames are intollerable and mercileſſe. O but flames are in Gods hands, *Daniel* 3. Chapter: againe, Martyrs haue had more comfort there, than in all their liues before. Oh but ſome of them haue cryed out of paines: And doe not men ſo who die in their beds too? but God hath borne them through theſe, and made them amends.

O get then inward ſtrength, and that will ouercome all feares, all torments; conclude wee with that good Martyr, If God call ever any of his to any ſuch ſufferings, hee will either weaken the flame or ſtrengthen their faith; he hath promiſed (that, which let vs liue and die in; to wit) that hee will not tempt beyond ſtrength: *And he is able to doe exceeding abundantly aboue all that we can ſpeake or thinke.* 2 Cor. 10.

Aſſure your ſelues, the feare of perſecution is more than perſecution it ſelfe, therefore I ſpeake to your feares, for there is none (through Gods mercy) with vs I am ſure to bee felt (I thinke) to be feared.

The ſame night, &c. That the Lord doth often hold his people long in ſuſpence, for thoſe things which he meanes to giue them; hee is out ſeeming ſlow, but ſure; ſure, but ſlow; thus hee was as good as his word to *Abraham*, hee gaue him a ſonne, but he held him off to the laſt houre; hee kept touch with his poſteriry, brought them out of Egypt, *Doct.* 3.

Egypt, but he deferred it till the laſt day; his bond was almoſt forfeited, yet he paid it before the Sunſet, *Exod.* 12. 17. 41. Thus *Ioſeph* was long in priſon, yet at the appointed time brought forth; and *Iſaac* long in captiuity, prayers were made, and yet *Daniel* could heare no anſwer till night was vpon him; *Iacob* wreſtles till day, &c. ſo alſo the woman of Canaan, *Matt.* 15. and the Church heere: in all which places wee ſee, that God is mindfull of his day. 2. That hee deferres ſometimes till the laſt houre be running.

Pſal. 105. 10.

Dan. 9.

Reaſ. The reaſon of this delay is manifold. 1. God would turne our eyes backward, and make vs ſay, O it is iuſt God ſhould deferre me, I haue deferred him; he called, and I would not heare; prayed me againe, againe, and againe, and I would not anſwer; therefore it is equall I ſhould call and cry, and not be heard.

2. God hereby would ſharpen our prayers for the preſent, therefore he ſeemes deafe, becauſe we ſhould ſpeake our; therfore ſlow, becauſe we ſhould be earneſt; thus *Daniel* interprets it: God deferres him, this is (ſaith he) but to try me, therefore hee ſpits vpon his hands, and takes better hold; O Lord forgiue, ſaith he, O Lord heare, O Lord open, and powres ſo many petitions and arguments vpon God, that there is no reſiſtance: thus *Iacob*, he ſees the day comming vpon him, and he had made nothing of it all night, and therefore now he ſets to it, *Goe*, ſaith he, *I will not let thee goe without a bleſſing.*

3. Hereby he prepares vs for the future receiuing

uing of his comforts; thus he humbles vs, thus he enlargeth vs, thus he fits vs for thankefulneſſe. The more pleſſings coſt vs, the better we will praiſe them, and praiſe God for them: adde to this, that theſe repulſes driue vs to further ſearches, as the Iſraelites at *Ai*, and *Gibeah*. Ioſ. 7. Iudg. 20.

Doth the Lord thus long deferre ſomtime his intended comforts and anſwers? Let vs konwe the courſes of his prouidence, and wait vpon him: behold the husbandman waits; when he hath ſowne his ſeed, hee doth not looke to reape and ſowe in a day: his corne is firſt buried, yea it dies, yea it growes downeward, before it comes vpward; and when it is vp, receiues many a ſnib and checke, yet hee waits; And why? becauſe he hath experience: ſo muſt wee, when wee haue ſowne our ſeed; ſay wee bury our prayers, ſay to our ſeeming they dye, ſay they growe downward, backward, ſay all things ſeeme to bee worſe after prayer with vs than before, yet wait; why? wee haue experience of our owne and other mens ſucceſſe: neuer did men ſow this ſeed, but they had a crop; though a late harueſt, yet a harueſt.

Ob. Oh but I haue praied exceding long.

Anſ. How long? *Iſaak* prayed twenty yeares for a childe, before he ſped, *Abraham* thirty, before hee ſped; *Abrahams* poſterity were foure hundred yeeres in captiuitie, before they were deliuered; the Church thirſted for Chriſt, one thouſand, two thouſand, three thouſand yeares, before they had him: How many thouſands, hundreds, ſcore of yeares, haſt thou waited?

Ob. O but I haue tryed all my friends, vſed al meanes, prayed my ſelfe, and got others to ſpeake too, and yet no helpe.

Anſ. And might not *Peter* ſay as much? not a Chriſtian in Ieraſalem, but had ſpoken, and ſpoken often, and yet he ſticks.

Ob. O but matters with me are worſe and worſe; the more I pray againſt pouerty, the poorer I am; the more I pray for patience, the worſe I am; the more I pray for faith, the leſſe I haue; the more I pray againſt paſſions and temptations, the more they flie in my face.

Anſ. Is not this, as we ſaid, that the Corne muſt goe backeward, before it come forward? was it not ſo with *Abraham* and *Sarah*, the longer they prayed, the elder they waxed, and ſo vnfitter for iſſue?

Ob. O but my ſinnes grow ſtronger by prayer.

Anſ. Not ſo, thou feeleſt it more then before; it is not becauſe ſinne is ſtronger, but thou ſounder. Againe, theſe motions of ſinne, bee not motiues of life, but ſymptomes of death; as the fowle ſtruggles and ſprunts moſt when the head is off: the pangs of death be now vpon thy luſts, take comfort.

Ob. O but now your comforts come too late, the date is out for me.

Anſ. Why? hath God ſaid, Pray no more, as to *Ieremie*? hath he ſtopt thy mouth? ſo long as God ſaith, pray; ſo long as the ſpirit within thee ſauh pray; ſo long as Gods people haue hearts to pray, neuer ſay it is too late to pray: if *Peter* bee out by midnight, or by day-breake, it is as well as if he had beene out a moneth before.

Ob.

Ob. Oh, but delayes breake the heart.

Anſ. But note the end of delayes, they are neuer to deny or fruſtrate, but to fit and to quicken: make theſe vſes of delaies, and then if thy ſute be not honeſt, neuer begin it; if it be, neuer leaue it: learne of husbandmen; when they pull downe a tree, or lift at ſome blocke, if they cannot ſtirre it, they call in helpe, if it come not at the firſt pull, they pull againe, if not then, ha, againe; if not then, ha, once more; at laſt they feele it comming, and then it comes amaine: learne of *Elijah*; hee prayed for raine; hauing prayed, lookes about him, nothing comes; hee prayed againe, nothing comes; hee prayed againe, nothing comes; at length, O Maſter (ſaith his ſeruant) I ſee a cloud, but it is but a little. Is it a cloud? then once more to it, and by and by the Heauens were masked with clouds. Learne of theſe men; *Peter* ſtickes in the Dungeon, one lifts, he cannot ſtirre him; try you (ſaith hee) to a ſecond, to a third, try a fourth, a fifth; at length heauen ſtirres, the chaines ſtirre, and *Peter* comes in amongſt them: learne of Chriſt himſelfe; the Widdow dealt with a Iudge, not a Father; a bad Iudge: ſhe was alone a ſimple Orator, yet ſhe preuailes: learne of beggars; they haue no command, no promiſe, no acquaintance, no Art; and yet will ſtand it out: the maſter chides, the Beggar ſtands it out; the Dame chides, hee ſtands ſtill; the ſeruants come, and ſay they dare not ſerue him; the children ſay we muſt not, and yet hee will not away. O Lord helpe our faith: how weake be we, if hauing precept, promiſe, kindred, Gods ſeruants,

1 King. 18. 43.

Luk. 18.

Gods Sonne on our ſides, we will be put off with a delay? well (as I ſaid) ſo long as a night, an houre, a minute, is left, pray; one night may compaſſe that which an hundred before could not.

It followeth; *An Angell, &c.*

Doct. 4. The Lord hath euer meanes at hand for his ſeruants; comfort and deliuerance, if ſet on worke: well might *Peter* ſay, *The Lord knoweth how to deliuer his*, &c. He is neuer at a ſtand: if they know how to pray, hee knoweth how to comfort.

2 Pet. 2.

Reaſ. 1. In himſelfe he is alſufficient; infinite in wiſdome, to inuent meanes; in power, to act them; and if need bee, to create more.

Eſa. 45.

2. He is the Lord of Hoſts, the Lord of euery creature; if our workes lye in the Seas, he is Lord of the Seas; if on the Land, he is Lord there; if in Priſon, he beareth the keyes of euery Gaole; if the heauens can help vs, he commends them; if winds, if beaſts, if friends, if ſtrangers, if foes, if Angels; the Lord hath the command of all perſons, things, and places.

Vſe 1. For comfort, roule thy ſelfe vpon God, caſt thy care vpon him, he will bring it to paſſe; is thy burthen pouerty? caſt it vpon him, and he will helpe it; is it ſinne, feare, ſorrow? whatſoeuer it be, he can beare it, and diſcharge thee.

Pſal. 37.

This Sermon was made in the depth of the dearth,

Oh but I ſee no meanes, I owe ſo much; ſo many in my family, and no meanes.

This is as if they ſhould haue ſaid; If wee had a friend in the Court, to moue *Herod*; if a friend in the Watch, to bribe him; if in the Priſon, to fee him; then ſomething might be done; but now all meanes

meanes faile vs. No, no, God hath meanes beyond our ſight; if men cannot doe it, Angels can, and ſhall: and if no man will pay the Widdowes debt, God will: if no body elſe will feed *Eliah*, the Ra- 2 King. 4.
uens ſhall: what doe we talke of meanes? all means are ſhut vp in God.

Ob. Oh, but my caſe is deſperate, it is not poſsible to helpe mee.

Anſw. Now we ſhall haue a tale of impoſsibilities: And why not poſsible? Shall any thing be Zach. 8. 6.
impoſsible to God?

Ob. Oh, but there be an hundred blockes in my way.

Anſ. But what is in his way, that makes his way thorow the ſeas, ſtones, wood, iron, &c? goe to the Eſa. 45. 16.
priſon, there is a blocke, a guard; paſſe that guard, there is a blocke, a doore; paſſe the doore, there is another, a chaine; paſſe the chaine, there is another, an iron gate. Oh, but what of this? if they can breake thorow all hindrances of vnbeliefe, diſcouragements, to prayer; God will breake thorow theſe, and a thouſand more, to their comfort. O, but God workes no wonders now. No? his Name is wonderfull ſtill; his power as great as euer, his wiſdome as deepe as euer, his promiſes as good, his loue as much to his as euer, our need as much, our intereſt as good, our Sauiour as good; all things ſtand as before: if wee can vſe former meanes, we ſhall finde former ſucceſſe, and God will doe abundantly aboue all that wee can ſpeake or thinke: we haue the Lords promiſe for this, *Epheſians* 3. 20. and *Eſay* 42. 16. *I will make darke*

Marke our Sauiors collection from Manna to bread. Mat. 4. Deut. 8. 3. Eſa. 9. 6.

light, and crookednesse straight. We haue had our owne experience; let any man that hath had any acquaintance with God and this holy duty, tell me when prayers were not successefull, when diddest thou euer speake to thy heauenly Father, but he did answer thee with some ease, some comfort? when diddest thou euer pray, but thy heart was thereby somewhat lightened? and if thou canst not but say with *Dauid*, in the same day I asked, I was thus far answered, *That my heart was strengthned*, *Psal.* 139. 3. doe not faile to conclude with *Dauid*, *Though I walke in the middest of troubles, yet* (vpon prayer) *I shall be reuiued*, 7. *and God will perfect his mercies in me for euer*, 8.

Psal. 139. 3.

Thus wee haue dispatcht some meditations: more we haue, but they must onely be named; as 1. *Herod* would, but could not bring forth *Peter* to tryall and execution: men be but men, and must doe as they may; for what they would doe against the Church, nor they, nor all the Deuils in Hell can doe.

2. The Lord can giue sleepe and peace in any place, at any time, in any company.

3. Gods best seruants and messengers are sometimes yoked with vildest offenders, &c.

4. Gods best creatures are the Churches seruants: Angels.

5. Lastly, the Lord can quickly shake his out of their chaines, rags, feares, fetters, &c. But what doe I meane thus to exceed? Brethren, I would faine haue you more thirsty of your time; doe you not waste it (as others doe) in idle impertinences, much

much leſſe in ſurueying States and Kingdomes. It is not for vs to ſit vpon Crownes and Thrones, and to turne Stateſmen; it is for vs to bee thankefull where God bleſſes, and to be praierfull when the Church labours: to this end I haue ſaid thus much; to perſwade you to the practice of what you know. Now your turne followes, lets ſee what wil be done, and how wel you will improue time, in ſpeaking to God. rather then to, or of men.

FINIS.

Certaine Queres and Cases touching the Theory and Practice of Prayer.

THis plaine Sermon hath not been oftner printed, than I haue beene importuned to inlarge it. Intreaties haue wonne so far vpon mee, as that I am content to adde two things: 1. Certaine queres and cases touching the theorie and practice of Prayer: 2. some inuitements and incouragements to perseuerance in this dutie. In both expect briefenesse and plainnesse. that so the porch may suite with the house.

Questions.

The first question then shall bee; what prayer is? Whereunto S. *Pauls* answere is, That it is a making knowne our desires to God. *Phil.* 4.6.

first, the will takes fire & desires. 2. the man brings & opens these desires to God; and the desire thus flaming & blazing vpward, is properly prayer: this desire is expressed sundry waies, either by an inward or outward word, as the Glos speakes; sometimes the minde speakes inwardly as in *Hannah* & *Moses*, and thats (mostly) the strongest voyce of all; sometimes the tongue vtters what the heart indites, *Psal.* 45. sometimes speach failes, a man can but chatter, not speake, with *Hezekiah*, haply not so much, as *Ps.*77. yet then he speaks most (like a busfing man) when he speaks least, his eies, hands face, teares speake, euery inward sigh, & outward member is a tongne. Now, the desire vented any of these waies, is a prayer; if the first way, 'tis called a mentall prayer; if the second, a vocall; if the third, a reall. As for *Bellarmines* intellectuall prayer in his Crosse-sense, wee leaue it to himselfe.

In Phil. 4.

The second question is, what be the kindes of prayer? *Answ.* A man prayes either for himselfe, or for others: and when for himselfe, either for the auersion of euill, or obtainement of good; that they call deprecation, this apprecation, as that for others supplication: whereto some adde thanks-giuing, vouching for all, 1 *Tim.* 2. 1. We only say three things, first, that howeuer thanks-giuing enuolue desire of acceptance, yet it is not formally prayer. Secondly, that prayer may admit the diuision giuen; but thirdly, whether the Apostles words in the originall, or his scope (perswading prayers for others) in that place will

will beare out the diſtinction, I ſuſpend.

The third queſtion touches vpon certaine requiſites in prayer, whereof ſome are more, ſome leſſe intrinſecall and inward: as firſt, touching the matter of prayer; where perſons and things come to be conſidered. For things, we lay downe two things for haſte; firſt, that euery thing will no more beare a prayer, than euery ſtreame will a Ship; ſecondly, the thing asked muſt firſt bee warranted vnder ſome precept or promiſe in generall, though not expreſly; ſecondly muſt bee of ſome importance, either in it ſelfe. or by circumſtance. A man muſt not ſue for a Licence to breake his Soueraignes lawes, nor come to his Prince to begge a pinne or a point. Vnleſſe circumſtance make it either dutie or neceſſitie, it is not prayer: it is preſumption that wee here from ſome mouthes, God ſend I may win this caſt, this game, and the like.

2. For perſons, this ſhall ſuffice; firſt, the perſon prayed vnto muſt be the Lord. Prayer is an homage onely due to him, hee claimes it with other his prerogatiues, *Pſal.* 51. 15. and the Church acknowledges it, *Pſal.* 65. 2. A precept and promiſe wee haue from him for the ſupporting of our faith whence prayer muſt flow. If any can ſhew either from any other, let him make his vſe thereof. But touching this point of praying to creatures no more but this, firſt, howeuer the doctrine ſeemes at firſt bluſh to haue as much countenance from men as any point controuerted and

waued betweene vs and Rome: yet secondly, it hath as little shew of any footinig in the Scripture as what hath least: the very truth is, nothing is brought but what seemes rediculous to such Iesuites as are versed in the Text. For vs, wee are taught to giue loweſt homage to higheſt Maiestie, and to tender diuine prayers to none lesse than a God.

2. For the party praying thus: first, euery one should be acquainted with this dutie; for it is a seruice due to the chiefe Lord, from all that hold any thing of him: secondly, all Gods growne children are acquainted with it; for hee hath no dumbe children. They all receiue the Spirit of prayers, and in their owne language doe call him Abba or Father. Thirdly, whosoeuer will pray acceptably and confidently, must be qualified, for person and graces. For person; hee must bee a sinner, 1. in the trade, state and bondage of sinne. God heares none such: hee must bee righteous, vpright, for to such the promise is made. *Psal.* 34. 15.

Rom. 8.

Ioh. 9.

2. For Graces; his vnderstanding and affections must be quallified: 1. in the vnderstanding part there must pee these graces; first knowledge, without which the minde cannot bee good, *Prou.* 19. A blinde sacrifice and Priest are abominable to God: the ignorant worships hee knowes not what, he cannot worship in spirit and truth, *Ioh.* 4. the reason is giuen by the Casist; Affection depends vpon the Vnderstanding. And if vpon that

Aqu.

ground

ground it bee beſt for a man to vnderſtand himſelfe in his priuate prayers, as ſome Ieſuites thinke, why not in publike too, as *S. Paul* would haue it.

2. Faith, not in that baſtard ſence that ſome father vpon vs, who either doe not or will not vnderſtand vs in the whole doctrine of faith, but faith is requiſite thus farre; firſt to beleeue that our perſons are accepted through Chriſt; ſecondly, that our ſuites are welcome with our perſons, and ſhall be euer rewarded, though not alwaies granted in the kinde. Thus hee that comes to God muſt act two acts of faith; he muſt beleeue firſt that God is, *i.* is really the ſame that his word reports him, moſt ſtrong, good, true., conſtant, &c. Heb. 11. ſecondly, that hee is a rewarder of them that come to him, and hath not ſaid in vaine, *Seeke ye my face*, as *Eſay* ſpeakes.

3. Humilitie, whereby wee come to ſet a due rate vpon our ſelues and God, and know the right diſtance betwixt him and vs. This humility helps vs to ſee that there is nothing but emptineſſe in vs, and (ſecondly makes vs willing to accept of Gods gifts vpon Gods tearmes, namely as free almes. The Lord is neere to euery humbled and broken ſpirit, *Pſal.* 34. to euery abaſed Publican, Luk. 18. but euery proud Phariſee is beheld aloofe, and ſent & Luk. 1. emty away.

Thus for the vnderſtanding, now for the will and affections, they muſt be good alſo, as the immediate ſprings of action. The goodneſſe of the

affection ſtands in three things, firſt in the ſtraightneſſe and poſition of it, that it bee turned the right way and looke vpon the right obiect, our affections ſtand backward, their backs bee vpon God, their faces vpon the creatures, nay vpon ſinne. Who ſo will pray to purpoſe, muſt haue the bent of his heart another way, hee muſt ſay with *Dauid*, I will ſet no wicked thing before mine eyes *Pſal.* 101. and againe, If I regard (or looke towards) iniquitie, God will not heare my prayers, *Pſal.* 66. 18. All thoughts, deſires and purpoſes of ſinne, muſt fall if the heart ſhall ſtand in prayer, and the whole ſoule and man turned to the Lord.

Bonum ſub ratione boni.

2. The goodneſſe of the affection ſtands in the quality of it, that it be ſincere, that is, that wee deſire goodneſſe for goodneſſe ſake, grace becauſe it is grace, whereby wee ſhall be enabled to glorifie God. Hee that hath truth in the inward parts hath the promiſe on his ſide, *Pſal.* 145. 18.

3. The third thing to be reſpected in the affection, is its iuſt quantity, which we call zeale. This in ſome due proportion is required in prayer: for no ſacrifice is welcome to God without ſome fire, ſome warmth. Dead prayers be as diſtaſtefull to God, as dead drinkes be to vs: the prayer that is auailable, muſt haue ſome ſpirit and feruour in it, *Iam.* 5. This for the matter.

2. Touching the meanes in which our prayers muſt be tendered; and here wee muſt know, that the Father will be honoured in the Sonne, whom hee

hee hath made the sole Mediator betwixt heaven and earth. And howsoeuer to others there bee Lords and Mediators many, yet to the Church, there is but one Sonne, one Name, one Altar, one high Priest, in whose hand alone they offer vp all. If any other be deputed as master of requests vnder him, let vs see his patent, and it suffices.

3. Touching the end of praying: first, it is not to acquaint God with any thing hidden, or to minde him of any thing forgoten, or to moue him to any mercy whereto hee is backward (as if wee could preuent him, and bee more desirous of the creatures good than hee is;) but it is 1. principally to acknowledge our dependancie and his soueraignty, and secondarily to make way for a thankefull and holy vse of mercies receiued.

Thus for matters more essentiall to prayer now for others more circumstantiall, a word is sufficient.

Quest. 4. First for time; 1. we are not tyed to all, to any set time in priuate prayer (of which wee speake;) first the dutie is affirmatiue, therefore bindes but to the season: secondly, other duties are also required and must haue their turne: 2. times of prayer are 1. Occasionall, which come not vnder rule. 2. Ordinary. Here 1. our Sauiour presumes daily prayer, as may be gathered *Mat.* 6. Not *ad semper.*

2. The statute in Israel required, in the name of the whole Church, morning and euening prayer and sacrifice. 3. Eminent men (especially in distressed times) presented themselues thrice a day. Dan. 6.

Psal. 55. a day before the Lord. And this is all that's said for time. As for (*Pray continually*) the Euchites might as well conclude continually feeding at *Dauids* table, as vncessant praying thence, v. 2 *Sam.* 9. 10.

2. For place: first, all places are warranted for priuate deuotions, *Ioh.* 4.21. 1. *Tim.* 2.8. secondly, the fittest is. that which is 1. freest from distraction, 2. fartheſt from suspition and appearance of hipocrisie.

For gesture, the rules are also two: first, all are sanctified, and in case may be vsed: secondly, thats the fittest that best 1. stirres affection, 2. expresses reuerrance.

4. For order: first, we are not tyed to any set course or forme; therefore (2)a man may begine with confession, thanksgiuing, petition, as hee sees cause. 2. he may vse or not vse a set forme for his owne particular, varying there onely where his case varies, thought in publike a prescribed forme be most conuenient, and agreeable to antiquitie.

Thus for the doctrinall part of prayer. Now a word or two to some cases respecting practice.

Case 1. And first, tis demanded how a man is to conceiue of God in prayer, since the more wee thinke of his essence wee loose our sel ues?

Vnsw. 1. first theres no direct beholding of God in his infiniteneſſe.

2. We must respect vpon him, 1. as he is presented in Christ, 2. as he is described in the word. See him with our eares in his atributes, as he is reported

ted to be ſtrong, mercifull, gracious, and ſo forward, as it followes in his ſtile and title, *Ex.* 34.

3. Laſtly, take him at the rebound in the creatures; in them there's ſome mercy, in him more: as Chriſt teaches vs in ſome parables to inferre.

Queſt. 2. How ſhal I do to confine my thoughts, and to keepe them to the point in hand, whileſt I am praying?

Anſ. 1. Bewaile the looſneſſe of thy nature, and pray with *Dauid*, *O Lord vnite my heart to thee.*

2. Raine-in thy thoughts at other, at all times: for when they haue got a courſe and cuſtome of ranging, they will not be called in at an houres warning.

3 Set thy mindes and thoughts vpon heauenly things, which are able to ſatisfie them; elſe like the Bee they'l flye from place to place, becauſe earthly things doe not ſatisfie them.

4. Giue God the heart, and the will commands the thoughts. Men in loue cannot put off the thoughts of their friend, though they would. Loue more, and thou wilt thinke better.

Queſt. 3. But how if I cannot come to God in faith, as to a father? the prayer of vnbeliefe is abominable.

Anſ. 1. There's often faith, where there's little or no feeling: Faith may worke directly, though without reflex from Chriſt to thee.

2. Vnbeliefe is either oppoſed, felt, bewailed, or not: vnbeliefe bewailed and reſiſted, ſhall neuer hurt vs, and may concurre with faith in the

same subiect, as *Marke* 9. 24.

Lastly, S. *Iames cap.* 1. 6. speakes not of a partiall and particular vnbeliefe in the subiect, but of an vniuersall and totall infidelity in respect of the obiect.

Quest. 4. But what if my heart be full of wrath, and swel against my brother when I should pray?

Ans. 1. Lay downe all thoughts of reuenge if wronged.

2 Take vp a resolution of peaceableness and satisfaction if thou shalt be found faulty.

3 Pray for the party; and when thou canst finde reasons why God should loue him, thou wilt see cause why thou shouldst pitty him. Prayer will calme and sweeten the affections: There's no danger of a bloudy *Saul*, if once he fall to praying, as God tels one, *Acts* 9.

Quest. 5. But what if a man be so dumbe and barren, that hee can say nothing when hee should pray?

Answ. 1. Let him inquire into the cause hereof. Sometimes dumbnesse comes from the abundant pressures and amaxements of the soule, when that (being ouerwhelmed, as *Dauid* often speakes, *Psal.* 142. 143.) can find no vent; In this case if a man doe but reiterate the same petition with our blessed Sauiour, or doe but chatter with *Hezekiah*, nay, suppose he cannot speake at all, as *Psalm.* 77. yet he is to stay himselfe in these instances, and Gods gracious promises, who hath eyes to see petitioners, as well as eares to heare them:

who

who heares our ſighings, and breathings, and knowes the meaning of vnuttered groanes, *Rom.* 8. and will pitty ſpeechleſſe prayers, as we doe maymed men, whoſe tongues are cut out. 1 *Chron.* 6. 40. *cum* 7. 17. *V. Pſal.* 102, 10 *Lam.* 3. 56.

But if this ſilence and barrenneſſe come from coldneſſe and vngraciouſneſſe, then he muſt runne another (and that's this) courſe: firſt hee muſt bewaile it in the cauſe: ſecondly, he muſt breake thorow it by a ſerious vſe of the meanes; that is, hee muſt firſt try another way: If thou finde nothing wanting, and ſeeſt no need of God or of prayer, and therefore canſt not fall to begging, yet ſee matter of confeſſion, and of thankſ-giuing; bleſſe God for what thou haſt receiued already, confeſſe thy coldneſſe and preſent deadneſſe, and ſo by ſtirring, thou ſhalt gather ſome warmth: 2. If this ſerue not, conſult ſome friend, fetch ſome quicknance thence, as Iron brightens and ſharpens Iron. Thirdly, if this worke not, betake thy ſelfe to Phyſicke; there's (as for the body, ſo) for the ſoule both food and Phyſicke. In ordinary times an ordinary dyet will preſerue the ſoule, but in caſe of ſickneſſe (whereof lazineſſe and liſtleſſeneſſe is ſtill a fore-runner) meanes more than ordinary muſt be vſed: thou muſt pray, faſt, cry in a more than wonted manner, elſe ſome great diſertion or temptation is at hand.

Queſt. 6. But how ſhall I know that my prayers are heard?

Anſw. Firſt, looke to Gods word; and if thou

haſt a promiſe of hearing, thou art heard: and this is indeed faith. To ſee Gods anſwer in my hand, and to my ſenſe, is feeling, not faith: to reade mine anſwer in the Promiſe, and to reioyce in that, and be thankfull for that with the Saints, without feeling, is true faith.

Act. Pſal.56.10. *V.* 2.Chr.20.18. *Heb.*3.17,18.

2 Looke to Gods workes; ſee how the prouidence workes vpon thy prayer: ſometimes God anſwers thee in the very kinde, giues the thing inſtanced: ſometimes hee anſwers thee with ſtrength in thy ſoule, as *Daued* ſpeakes; thou haſt ſtrength to waite, ſtrength to hang on, and to come againe. Know this for thy comfort, euery ſecond prayer for grace, is an anſwer to the firſt, euery third to the ſecond, and ſo forward.

*Pſal.*138.3.

*Queſt.*7. But it may be God heares me for ſome friends ſake, whoſe prayers are mingled with mine, how ſhall I know that God hath heard me?

Anſ. 1. Prayers begg'd and borrowed, are thine and conſent.

2. If thou hadſt a part in the worke, take thy ſhare alſo in the wages and comfort.

3 Thoſe prayers that make thee more humble, more thankfull for bleſſings receiued, and more carefull to glorifie God with his gifts, are thine; the anſwer is to thee, if the fruite and vſe of the bleſsing receiued be to God.

Queſt. 8. But ſith wicked men and hypocrites haue now taken vp a courſe of prayer, and breeding and cuſtome hath wrought a kinde of conſcience in them of this dutie, how ſhall a man diſcerne

diſcerne betweene the prayers of the vpright and the hypocrite?

Anſw. The maine difference is to bee fetcht from their perſons and proiects in the duty: but that I be not tedious, compare what *Paul* ſaith Chriſtians ſhould doe, and what experience ſaith they vſually doe, and the differences will ſoone be ſeene, *Epheſ.* 6. 18. wee finde coucht, many requiſites in prayer, which the truely godly obſerues, the falſe-hearted regards not.

1 *Praying* (ſaith the Apoſtle.) Here is one difference; a wicked man luſts, wiſhes, as the childe doth (Would I had ſuch a thing) but he prayes not. *Ephe.* 6. 18. inſtanced.

2 A godly man varies his petitions according to his needs and occaſions; another hath but one ſalue for euery ſore, a *Pater noſter*, a *Creede*, *&c.*

3 The vpright holds a courſe in all times and changes; the hypocrite will not call vpon God at all times, *Iob* 27. 10.

4 The vpright prayes (*in the ſpirit*;) his Petitions are the iſſues of his owne ſpirit, and of Gods ſpirit: the Hypocrite, as he is deſtitute of this, ſo that is dead within him; his prayers come but from his lips, or his braines, there is no ſpirit in them.

5 The vpright ioynes (*Watchfulneſſe*) with prayer; before-hand, hee watches himſelfe, leſt his heart ſhould not bee in a praying caſe when his houre comes. In prayer he obſerues himſelfe, leſt hee flit or flag, end or begin, before hee is a-

ware; after prayer, he watches where his arrow lights, that ſo hee may finde it againe, or ſhoote another the ſame way. Not ſo the wicked, hee leapes from cups, oathes, &c. to prayer; hee can doe two or three things at once in prayer, waſh and pray, button and truſſe him, &c. and pray the while, &c.

Speech is now of ſolemn prayer, not of ſudden ciaculations.

6. The vpright holds out in prayer, and will not be beaten off from God to ſinfull meanes; the wicked like a falſe Iade will trample after a pull or two, and ſay with him, It is in vaine to waite vpon God any longer.

2 *Kings* 6.33.

7 The vpright prayes for others (and thoſe Saints;) the Hypocrite is for himſelfe, wife, children, friends, not for Saints, at leaſt not for all, certainely not for *Pauls* (as it followes, *verſ.* 19.) or if, yet not that the word may grow: ſinfull mens prayers vſually begin and end in themſelues, at leaſt end in naturall things and friends, as themſelues are naturall, &c.

Queſt. 9. But many being wonted from infancie to pray, cannot be quiet till they haue prayed; how ſhall I know that I pray of conſcience, not of cuſtome; becauſe God bids mee, and not my parents onely?

Anſw. 1. If thou prayeſt vpon inward motiues, and from principles of thine owne, becauſe thou feeleſt an inward want of grace, and need of prayer, a decay of vigour, &c. When thou waſt a childe thou didſt eate, becauſe thy mother put the ſpoone ſometimes to thy mouth, when thine appetite

appetite was not great, but now thou eateſt to liue, and prayeſt to liue, &c.

2. If thou iudge thy ſelfe for manner as well as matter. Hee that prayes but of faſhion, and for others ſakes, cares not, ſo the thing be done, how it be done; but hee that prayes for himſelfe, for life, for prayers ſake, and doth the worke out of conſcience, is carefull, not onely to pray, but to pray well, and iudges himſelfe as well for his deadneſſe, and ſleepineſſe, and diſtraction, &c. in prayer, as for his neglect of it altogether, &c. Thus farre wee haue anſwered ſome queſtions. Now wee paſſe to ſome motiues vnto prayer, whether for our ſelues or others. And here wee will content our ſelues with two onely; 1. conſider how needfull the practice is: 2. how hopefull the ſucceſſe.

Motiues to Prayer.

1 For the firſt, this we know in generall, that 1. in the creature nothing is to be found but emptineſſe and beggery.

2 That in Chriſt are hid all treaſures of wiſedome and comfort.

3 That wee haue none other meane of winning ought from Chriſt, but prayer: if we truſt to power, he will out-match vs; if to wit, hee will out-reach vs: the prayer onely of faith ouercomes him.

2. For our ſelues in particular. Our need of prayer will appeare, if we 1 compare our ſelues with our betters: good *Dauid*, great *Paul*, (that wall of the Church, as hee is called) found their owne

Chryſ. de orando deum. Not the fixt part, yet Chriſtian, of thoſe we know, *Brightwood.*

owne and others too, few enow; and if they needed prayers, doe not wee? 2. If we conſider the ſtate of the world as now it ſtands. 1. The greateſt part of the Gentiles lie in darkneſſe, vnder Sathan, and yet our fleſh. 2. We are debtors to the Iewes, who are yet vnder the vaile. 3. In the Church; our brethren abroad lie vnder great, either coldneſſe, or ignorance, or perſecution. Laſtly, our ſelues at home need prayers not a few. For firſt, the number of Swearers, Curſers, Prouokers, farre exceeds the mourners and prayers; ſo farre, that for one prayer, you haue one thouſand of oathes, ſinnes, &c. 2. Our meanes and mercies doe infinitely aggrauate our ſinnes. 3. Many that thinke they pray, ſend ſweet and bitter out of the ſame mouth, at leaſt curſe with their hands whilſt they bleſſe with their mouthes. 4. Our dayes of peace haue beene many; wee are reſerued to the laſt place, and all the world lookes what will become of vs. 5. Gods former ſtroakes haue not wrought any kinde, either reformation or humiliation. 6. Wee haue beene long in a declenſion and conſumption. Laſtly, and in a word, wee and our friends abroad and at home, are encompaſſed with ſinnes ſo prouoking, with enemies ſo many and ſo mighty, that wee muſt make our wayes thorow all by prayer, or elſe we fall. The Tongue of man cannot demonſtrate how wee ſhould long ſubſiſt and ſupport our ſelues, vnder our preſſing euils, vnleſſe we call in mercy and helpe from Heauen. The concluſion therefore is to all, that know

know what their interest is in God, and what the power of prayer is, to addresse themselues to this dutie.

Now lest any mans faith should flagge, in regard of his owne defects, and our great prouocations, let vs take into our consideration the second motiue, and bethinke our selues of some encouragements vnto prayer, whether alone or in company, but especially in ioynt prayer, where wee concurre in petitions, though not in place.

These encouragements are many; I name now these following:

Encouragements to prayer.

1 Consider what God is, with whom we deale, by nature goodnesse it selfe; and the nature of goodnesse is to communicate it selfe. This encouraged *Benhadad*, as wee haue heard, that the Kings of Israel are mercifull: If a kinde man bee easily perswaded, a mercifull man soone intreated, what is kindnesse and mercy it selfe? God takes more delight in doing good, then wee can in receiuing, therefore without intreaty hee doth much, much more, &c. Indeed prayer is but a part of our homage, and a meane to fit vs for receiuing: it neither puts mercy into God, nor stirs mercy in him. Wee cannot loue our selues so well, so much as God doth. 2. As he is willing, so able to helpe, without cost, studie, labour: hee is able to doe more, farre more then we can speake or thinke; much lesse we cannot conceiue or say what he is able and willing to doe. *Eph*, 3.

2 Consider what our relation is to him; 1. hee

is our Father: the law of man or nature doth not meerely caſt vs vpon him, but hee of his owne will vndertakes vs, bids vs call him Father, depends vpon him for all neceſſaries, and expect them from him; and will hee then faile vs? Hee that came to his brother for three loaues, came out of ſeaſon, to a poore man, to his trouble, who was but his neighbour, no kinſman, yet he ſpeeds, Shee that came to the Iudge, came to a Iudge, not a Father, a cruell man, ſcarce a man, not a God; came againſt another not meerely for her ſelfe, yet ſhe ſpeeds; and ſhall not we with a Father?

3. Conſider how hee hath engaged himſelfe to vs; 1. if we pray, hee is tyed to anſwer: if we hold our bargaine, and ſeeke, he cannot goe back, nor deny himſelfe: nay hee hath vndertaken to giue his Spirit, to giue vs a Prieſt, Chriſt, to teach vs how to pray, to anſwer vs whileſt we pray: all this vnder his hand; and is not this a faire encouragement?

Si Imperator diceret pete quod vis, &c. v. Aug. in Pſal. 34.

4 Conſider what meanes and friends wee haue to him, euen all whom hee reſpects. Chriſt myſticall is but one body, and makes vs but one voyce: what one Chriſtian warrantably askes, all (in generall) aske. All the Chriſtians in *France*, *Spaine*, and all in all the Shires of *England*, meete together in one ſpirit before the Lord in heauen, & ioyn in the ſame ſuites: yea the Lord hath ſo taught them to pray, that no one member, or matter that will beare a prayer is excluded. Now if all Gods ſubiects, nay his children ioyne in one, ſhall they

Mille in tot gentibus vnus. v. Aug. in pſal. 101. part. 1.

they not ſpeed? eſpecially if wee looke to the head: 1. God hath made him an high Prieſt for vs: 2. ſaid that in him hee will bee well pleaſed, told vs, that whatſoeuer wee aske in his name, we ſhall haue it: 3. he hath prayed for vs, he hath made entrance and acceſſe. *Epheſ.* 3. 12. *&c.* made vs acceptable: 4. all this is ratified by promiſe and oath, that by two immutable things wee ſhould haue ſtrong conſolation in repairing to God; and ſhall not all this worke comfort? eſpecially ſith he euer liues to make interceſſion. Suppoſe Chriſt were now in perſon with vs at prayer, would wee doubt to ſpeed? He euer liues, &c. and his prayers liue, and his blood liues, &c. *Heb.* 7. 25. Aug. in pſal. 85

5. Conſider what prayer is to God: he loues it, and loue is bountifull; tis his delight, tis incenſe: he ſo loues it, that he loues the ſhadow and picture of it. When beaſts cry, hee heares them, when children, as *Iſhmael*, he heares them; when ſinfull men, as *Rhehoboam*, (*Pſal.* 107.) he heares them: ſo loues it, that hee begges it, *Cant.* 2. and with *Moſes*, *Let me alone*, and *Iacob*, *Let me goe*: ſo loues them, that he would not haue a prayer loſt or ſpilt. *Ier.* 14. *Pray not for this People, I will not heare.* God would no waſte of prayer: when 'twill not take, hee will ſhut vp the mouth, Pray not: when he ſaith Pray, 'twill be to purpoſe. Now that which is ſo pleaſing to him, will be profitable to vs.

6. Conſider former experience: did wee euer pray, but we were the better for it? did wee euer ioyne in publike prayers, but we found them ſucceſſefulle

ceſſefull? In Eightie Eight there were ſolemne prayers they tooke; in the time of Peſtilence, publike prayers, they tooke; againſt the Parliament when the Gunpowder-treaſon was diſcouered, God ſtirred vp many to pray much, 'twas ſucceſſfull; in the wet harueſt, we ſought the Lord, the ſunne brake out; in the great drought men ſought againe, and ſped againe: in our then Noble Princes voyage, men ſent their prayers after him, and fetcht him home againe. And what we ſay of our ſelues, may we not of a thouſand more recorded in the World? Shew mee a Nation or Church that euer ioyned, but they ſped.

7 Conſider what perſons haue ſped and beene heard heretofore, our ſelues, and others like our ſelues. *Elijah* was a man ſubiect to like paſsions, &c. *Manaſſe* was a ſinfull man before, when he prayed, he was heard. *Ionah* a paſsionate man, who by his owne folly and ſinne had drawne troubles on himſelfe, yet he prayes, and is heard. *Hagar*, a poore woman, of no great parents, knowledge, prayes, and ſhe is heard. And thus God is rich to all that call vpon him. *Rom.* 10.

8 Conſider for what perſons they haue beene heard. *Amos* prayed for a ſinfull People, God heard him. *Elijah* for a ſinfull Kingdome in a wicked Age, God heard him. *Moſes* for a rebellious generation, God heard him. *Abraham* for Sodome, *if tenne righteous, &c.* If one ſhall bee heard for a thouſand of Rebels, may not a thouſand of children be heard for one ſeruant?

9 Conſi-

9 Consider what prayers haue beene heard. *Ionah* scarce vtters a petition at all, but mones, yet hee is heard. *Hezekiah* chatters, *Dauid* cannot speake, yet heard. Short prayers, confused prayers, broken, &c. sighes, grones, all are currant. Psal. 77.

19 Consider in what cases they haue beene heard: in cases desperate, 1. for the thing, when in appearance it was impossible to bee holpen. So *Iob*, a man would haue thought that his estate, strength, had beene irrecouerable; when they fall to sacrificing, all is healed. So *Peter*, *Acts* 12. So *Elijah* and others seeme to found their prayers vpon impossibilitie, yet speede. So the Armie that was thundering in the Storie of the Church. 2. For time: Prayer hath holpen when help seemed to bee past. A man would haue thought it had beene too late for them (*Ester* 3.) to pray, when the Decree was past: too late for *Hezekiah* to pray, when sentence was giuen: too late for *Daniel*, when his death was sealed, when execution was done, and hee in the Denne: for *Ionah*, when swallowed: for the Children, when in the Furnace: but *nullum occurrit Regi tempus*: wee may haue accesse when we will, day or night, &c. hee is tyed to no time; 'tis neuer too late to pray, whilest hee sayes pray. If now our hearts are prepared, he will Bow his eare, *Psal.* 10. O but our sinnes hinder! Pray against them O but wee are not sure to carry particular suites! We are sure to haue them or better. A Father will not giue his childe a stone when hee askes bread, but hee will giue

God vseth vs as sicke men are vsed *Vide Aug. in Ps.* 144.

giue him bread if he aske a ſtone; ſo ours. Wee are ſure againe, that prayer ſhall doe vs good: what good? See *Iob* 22.27. Firſt, thou ſhalt haue hearing (come when thou wilt:) this is more than Princes will or can yeeld. Secondly, thou ſhalt haue matter of thankſ-giuing, ſpeed ſo well, that thou ſhalt bleſſe God for praying. Thirdly, thou ſhalt eſtabliſh purpoſes, which will neuer elſe hold as heere. Fourthly, thou ſhalt finde comfort, ſtrength in thy heart, as *Dauid* ſaith, thou ſhalt ſee Gods fauour and face in ioy, *Iob*, 33. 26. Fifthly, thou ſhalt haue bouldneſſe and confidence for the future. Sixtly, thou ſhalt deliuer the Iland, doe thy ſelfe and others good; good in ſoule as well as body, *Iames* 5. Now then what lacke you? what would you haue? Would you haue corruptions abated? pray againſt them: graces encreaſed? pray for them: the afflicted Churches comforted? pray, &c. the King bleſſed in in ſoulr, gouernment, mariage, poſterity, &c? O talke leſſe, pray more. And if the tooles bee blunt, you are not ſo ſtript of weapons, but you haue each his file at his owne houſe, ſharpen them in priuate, by priuate faſtings and humiliations. You haue meanes, if hearts: if you will loſe all comfort for want of asking, you are acceſſary to your owne vndoing.

Exerce auaritiam tuam. Aug. in pſ. 34.

Ob. But God hath his times of trying his people, and will deliuer them vp to troubles, perſecutions, &c. If God ſo purpoſes at any time, prayer cannot hinder.

Sol.

Sol. Hath God such times? First, prayer is needfull, that wee may be fitted. Secondly, such times seldome come, till there come first a cooling and declining. So twas with vs, as *Ridley* and *Bradford* complaine: So in the Primitiue Church, See what is said by *Eusebius*, *l.* 8. *c.* 1.

But I run too far: the Conclusion shall be this. Reader, thou seest what's to be first knowne, secondly to be done in this errand of prayer. Thou canst not but see great need of praying, nor maist thou deny great hope of speed, in case thou wilt buckle to the worke. Now if thou be a man, (not a picture and a shaddow) doe not trifle and tattle as shifters doe. O that wee mought haue Publique fasts, publique meetiugs, publike reformations, &c. But get thee into thy Closet, and begin thine owne reformation as soone as thou wilt, pray and fast as long as thou wilt, so long as thou sayleſt by Gods Compasse and Rule.

FINIS.

Who hath believed our Repors
And to whom is the Arom of the
Lord reveled For he shall grow
up before him as a tender plant and
as a root out of a dry ground he hath noc
forme nor comliness and when wee shall
see him there is no Beauty that wee